

Message Text

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SUBJECT: GOP ANNOUNCES JANUARY 1977 TERMINATION OF SIL OPERATIONS

REF: LIMA 2340

1. PRIME MINISTER FERNANDEZ MALDONADO ISSUED A
RESOLUTION APRIL 15 DESIGNATING A COMMISSION COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM TEN MINISTRIES TO ARRANGE FOR THE TRANSFER OF PROGRAMS AND ASSETS OF THE SUMMER INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTICS (SIL) TO THE GOP BY JANUARY 2, 1977. THE MINISTERIAL RESOLUTION ALSO SET UP AN INTER-AGENCY INSPECTION COMMITTEE, HEADED BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE WAR MINISTRY, IN THE SIL'S MAIN WORK SITE OF YARINACOCHA. THE COMMITTEE'S TASK IS TO ASSURE THE "PROTECTION OF GOP INTERESTS AND A CONTINUANCE OF SERVICES PROVIDED TO JUNGLE NATIVE COMMUNITIES".

2. THE APRIL 15 MINISTERIAL RESOLUTION FOLLOWED AN APRIL 12 PRESS INTERVIEW BY DONALD LINDHOLM, DIRECTOR OF THE SIL YARINACOCHA CENTER, IN WHICH LINDHOLM BROKE THE STROY THAT THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION HAD DECIDED TO TERMINATE SIL OPERATIONS EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1977 (LIMA 2340). LINDHOLM WAS EXTENSIVELY QUOTED IN

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A FRONT-PAGE EL COMERCIO ARTICLE APRIL 13, UNDER THE HEADLINE

"MEMBERS OF SIL WILL ABANDON COUNTRY AT END OF THIS YEAR".

3. FOLLOWING THE LINDHOLM DECLARATION, EUSTAQUIO MAYLLE ORTEGA, PRESIDENT OF THE GOP-ORGANIZED CAMPESINO CONFEDERATION (CNA), HERALDED THE "EXPULSION" WHICH HE SAID WAS CAUSED BY SIL'S "ESPIONAGE WORK IN THE SERVICE OF IMPERIALIST COUNTRIES".

MAYLLE DECLARED THAT THE CNA SHOULD TAKE OVER SIL PROPERTIES IN ORDER TO "DEVISE A PURELY REVOLUTIONARY PLAN IN ZONES WHERE SIL HAS BEEN OPERATING". HOWEVER, THE APRIL 15 MINISTERIAL RESOLUTION DOES NOT MENTION ANY CNA ROLE AND PROVIDES FOR THE TRANSFER OF SIL PROPERTY TO THE STATE. CNA SPOKESMEN ALSO CALLED FOR SIL EXPULSION TO BE FOLLOWED BY ACTION AGAINST "THE SWISS MISSION, THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES AND OTHER (GROUPS) THAT CONTINUE THEIR WORK AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL".

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE EDUCATION MINISTRY HAD NOTIFIED SIL IN MARCH OF THE JANUARY 1977 TERMINATION DATE, THERE WAS SOME FEELING THAT THE RECENT GOP POLITICAL SHIFT MIGHT AID THE SIL IN AN EFFORT TO STRETCH OUT THE TRANSFER PERIOD. THE FACT THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO PUBLICITY ON THE GOP DECISION NOT TO RENEW SIL CONTRACT, WAS CONSIDERED A HOPEFUL SIGN WHICH COULD LEAD TO A POSTPONEMENT OF SIL DEPARTURE DATE. THE APRIL 12 PRESS INTERVIEW BY SIL'S YARINACOCHA DIRECTOR POSSIBLY Affected THE TIMING OF THE SUBSEQUENT MINISTERIAL RESOLUTION WHICH CONFIRMED THE JANUARY 1977 TRANSFER DATE. THE PRESS INTERVIEW WAS A DEPARTURE FROM SIL'S LOW PROFILE POLICY, AND LIMA SIL REPRESENTATIVE LAMBERT ANDERSON TOLD EMBOFF THAT HE WAS TOTALLY SURPRISED, AND SOMEWHAT DISMAYED, TO READ THE LINDHOLM INTERVIEW. ANDERSON SAID THAT THE MAJOR SIL GOAL NOW IS TO RETAIN USE OF SIL HOMES AT YARINACOCHA FOR THE USE OF MISSIONARIES WHO WILL CONTINUE TO WORK IN A PRIVATE CAPACITY AFTER TERMINATION OF THE FORMAL CONTRACT WITH THE GOP. HOWEVER, THE MINISTERIAL RESOLUTION DOES NOT SEEM TO PROVIDE FOR SIL'S RETENTION OF THESE ASSETS. ALTHOUGH NEWSPAPERS CARRIED ANTI-SIL STATEMENTS OF CAMPESINO REPRESENTATIVES, PRESS TREATMENT OF SIL DEPARTURE HAS BEEN FREE FROM THE IDEOLOGICAL AND ANTI-U.S. FLAVOR THAT WOULD HAVE CHARACTERIZED IT BEFORE RECENT CHANGE OF NEWSPAPER DIRECTORS.

DEAN

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